

announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Board of Visitors to the United States Coast Guard Academy:

Mr. COURTNEY, Connecticut
Mr. SHAYS, Connecticut

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JAMES L. OBERSTAR, Chairman, Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, July 25, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House, The Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 194 of title 14, United States Code, as Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I am required to designate three Members of the United States Coast Guard Academy Board of Visitors. I designate Representative Michael H. Michaud (Maine), Representative Mazie Hirono (Hawaii), and Ranking Member John L. Mica (Florida) to serve on the Board of Visitors.

Since its founding in 1876, the Coast Guard Academy, based in New London, Connecticut has accomplished its mission of "educating, training and developing leaders of character who are ethically, intellectually, professionally, and physically prepared to serve their country." The Board of Visitors meets annually with staff, faculty and cadets to review the Academy's programs, curricula, and facilities and to assess future needs. The Board of Visitors plays an important supervisory role in ensuring the continued success of the Academy and the tradition of excellence of the U.S. Coast Guard.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
Chairman.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

HONORING THE 1ST BATTALION OF THE 133RD INFANTRY OF THE IOWA NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. BRALEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome the members of the 1st Battalion of the 133rd Infantry of the Iowa National Guard home to Iowa after a lengthy deployment in Iraq, and to honor and thank them for their service there.

Today was a momentous day in Iowa as the members of the 1-133rd, known as the "Ironman Battalion," were re-

united with their friends, family, and loved ones at a homecoming ceremony in Waterloo. This day of reunion and celebration has been anxiously awaited in Iowa since the battalion left for Iraq last year. An overflow crowd of thousands packed Riverfront Stadium to welcome the hundreds of men and women home. As they drove the final miles from Ft. McCoy in Wisconsin, Iowans lined the road to wave at the 1-133rd.

Sadly, today was also made bitter-sweet by the absence of two members, Sergeant 1st Class Scott Nisely and Sergeant Kampha Sourivong, who were tragically killed during combat operations in Iraq in September 2006.

It is impossible for those who have not served in Iraq to fully understand the experiences of the 1-133rd, or to comprehend the sacrifices that they and their families have made on behalf of our country. However, I am glad that the Memorial Day special edition of "60 Minutes" gave Americans a small glimpse of the challenges that members of the 1-133rd and their families have faced throughout their long deployment, and more importantly into their incredible perseverance.

Iowans who watched the "60 Minutes" special featuring the 1-133rd saw the story of their friends, neighbors and loved ones who chose to serve and sacrifice when their country called them. We saw the daily danger faced by the 1-133rd in Iraq as they helped deliver fuel to coalition forces. We saw their families missing them and adjusting back home. We saw the hardship and heartache that was experienced by the members and their families when they received the news that their tour of duty was to be extended from April until this summer. And we saw the lives of our fellow Iowans cut tragically short.

For me, the program also reinforced what I had already learned about the members of the 1-133rd from my frequent communications with their commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Ben Corell, that they are men and women of great strength and character who selflessly and bravely put their lives on the line every day for their country in Iraq.

The contributions of the 1-133rd have indeed been crucial to the U.S. mission in Iraq. Throughout their tour of duty in the al Anbar province, one of the most dangerous parts of the country, the 1-133rd detained over 60 insurgents. They completed over 500 missions providing security for convoys, and logged in over 4 million mission miles. They have delivered over one-third of the fuel needed to sustain coalition forces in Iraq.

I hope that it gives members and families of the 1-133rd pride to reflect upon their accomplishments and to know that they are part of the longest-serving Iowa military unit since World War II, and part of the Army National Guard unit which has served the longest continuous deployment of any Na-

tional Guard unit in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They have made me and so many others proud through their work and their sacrifices in Iraq, and I am incredibly privileged to represent them in the United States Congress.

I believe that the entire country should commend and thank these members and the families of the 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry of the Iowa National Guard for their contributions to the U.S. mission in Iraq. That is why today I introduced a resolution in the House to honor and thank them for their service and sacrifices there. The strong bipartisan support this resolution has from 70 original cosponsors, including the entire Iowa congressional delegation, demonstrates the pride and gratitude that Americans feel toward our men and women serving in uniform.

I look forward to the swift passage of this resolution in the House of Representatives, and I hope that it comes to serve as a genuine expression of thanks from a grateful State and a grateful Nation.

We will be forever indebted to the members and families of the 1-133rd for their service and sacrifice. Again, I would like to commend and thank this incredible battalion for their work, and join their families, friends and neighbors in welcoming them home.

□ 2300

HONORING THE LIFE OF PFC. BRANDON KEITH BOBB

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill said that, "We are masters of our fate, the task which has been set before us is not above our strength; that its pangs and toils are not beyond our endurance. As long as we have faith in our own cause and an unconquerable will to win, victory will never be denied us."

Army PFC Brandon Keith Bobb believed in these words. He believed in the mission of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He believed in freedom and liberation from tyranny and terrorism.

Private First Class Bobb was born and raised in Port Arthur, Texas, a small town in southeast Texas that I represent. He attended Memorial High School and was a member of the track and field team. His high school coach remembers a young man who exhibited leadership as a high school student. His fellow students looked up to him and followed his examples.

Private First Class Bobb did not get the opportunity to graduate from Memorial High School because of Hurricane Rita. Hurricane Rita reared her vicious head and forced Bobb and his family to evacuate southeast Texas, and they relocated in Florida. He finished high school there.